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Borneo through the Lens: A.C. Haddon's Photographic Collections, Sarawak 1898–99

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Early photographic and anthropological processes produced specific forms of colonial knowledge. Images of Borneo captured during the colonial period thus offer a snapshot of the emerging field of anthropology. British explorer A.C. Haddon played a role in shaping early anthropological theory, from his 1898 expedition in Torres Straits and Sarawak to the subsequent analysis of his findings upon his return to Britain. During this time, the study of exotic people and places was the object of a new form of empiricism; the period also coincided with the circulation of a range of images of Asia. These images played a crucial part in constructing popular assumptions about colonized peoples and their social positions in the colonial hierarchy. Haddon's photographic collections were connected to a larger process of colonial knowledge production in which various images — including other photographs, early film footage, paintings and etchings — wrestled with competing representations of the region. His photographs of Sarawak convey the struggle in the emerging discipline of anthropology to distil objective "truths" while competing with the subjective experiences afforded by social relations with local communities.

Keywords: A.C. Haddon, colonialism, photography, Sarawak, Borneo, anthropology.

In 1898 the British naturalist-turned-anthropologist Alfred Cort Haddon left London for a two-year scientific expedition to the Torres Strait Islands in Melanesia. During this period, Haddon and his colleagues amassed hundreds of specimens and photographs, which eventually became the Haddon collection of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology of the University of Cambridge

(MAA). The contents of this collection expose us to a turning point in anthropology. In particular, they provoke questions about the discipline's foundations and its role in shaping colonial knowledge. For Haddon's research heralded the passage of anthropology from a matter of armchair study, based on second-hand data, to rigorous and multidisciplinary fieldwork. He advocated a new approach, the "intensive study of limited areas", which anticipated the work of later anthropologists such as Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown (Stocking 1995, p. 81). This approach required the anthropologist to be a full participant in the cultural life and customs of the community of study, as a means of gaining comprehensive knowledge of its culture. The technique contributed to professionalizing the work of explorers, differentiating them from travellers, missionaries and colonial staff, as their observations came to be viewed as comprehensive and powerful.

In addition to its intensive study of the local, Haddon's expedition was also peculiar for its emphasis on the visual. His fieldwork practice made use of the latest audiovisual technologies of the time, including photography (stereoscopic and colour photography), the wax cylinder phonograph and the cinematograph (see Chua 2009, pp. 129–46; Dunlop 1983, pp. 11–18; Long and Laughren 1993, pp. 32–36; Edwards 2001*b*, pp. 157–80; Grimshaw 2001, pp. 15–30; Griffiths 2002, pp. 123–48). These technologies helped to solidify Haddon's reputation as an anthropologist, because the images that they permitted him to capture depicted a pacified race and thus helped to convey the apparent success of his expedition. Photography perpetuated representations of a seemingly authentic reality; the prevailing attitude at the time was that photographs provided "evidence" of what was truly going on. Photographic images captured the "real" world (Chandler and Livingstone 2012, p. 1).

From the first biography of Haddon, written just a few years after his death (Quiggin 1942), to the more recent collection of essays published on the expedition's centenary (Herle and Rouse 1998), Haddon's contribution to the institutionalization of anthropology was never seriously questioned. Most scholars focused on the work Haddon undertook in the Torres Strait and on New Guinea. Few

paid attention to the part of the expedition on Borneo, where some members of Haddon's team spent a few months between the end of 1898 and the spring of 1899.

The few references to this stage of the expedition are dismissive. The first Haddon biography, for instance, describes Borneo as a "diversion" (Quiggin 1942, p. 103). Other scholars have referred to the adventure in Borneo as "a delightful way to spend a holiday and to acquire a general knowledge of the customs and character of the people" (Stocking 1995, p. 111), or underlined the inconsistency of the results achieved (Kuklick 1991, p. 135). In fact, the great dearth of attention to the expedition's time on Borneo has some justification; the visit there was impromptu and ill-equipped from a scientific point of view. Nevertheless, Haddon's work reflects a fascination with Sarawak that lasted for most of his academic career. The voluminous papers preserved at the Cambridge University Library and the rich photographic collection in the MAA give Haddon's visit to Borneo unmistakable historic significance.

While the Borneo phase of the expedition did not lead to major scientific outcomes, it led to Haddon contributing occasional papers and producing two publications based on his visit to Sarawak. This work differs significantly from that based on the expedition to the Torres Strait Islands. The photographic collections in particular, along with Haddon's subsequent observations about his visit to Sarawak, highlight a period that was full of uncertainties. Doubt about the accuracy of parallels between the new anthropological findings and the classification of the people into "tribes" on the basis of ethnic difference began to surface in his work. At other times, it was clear that Haddon endorsed colonial officials' accounts about the local communities in Sarawak, and that his support contributed to colonial assumptions about the region of Asia in the metropolis.

The visual practices relating to taking photographs in that time and place reveal the tension between emerging anthropological conclusions and colonial officials' observations about ethnic differences. A closer analysis of the photographs taken in Sarawak by the Haddon expedition permits examination of the emerging contradictions in

the new anthropological discipline. These contradictions lay in the juxtaposition of "salvage ethnography" (see Gruber 1970) and pressure for the discipline to perform its colonial administrative functions. Haddon's photographs provide proof of the internal conflict already surfacing in the discipline. They emphasized the fraught relationship between scientific reason and subjective experience. These issues had repercussions in the uses of the images and other material collected, specifically because they were central to the struggle to arrive at an appropriate understanding of the territory's complex history, power dynamics and social relations. Sarawak thus represents a crucial site for understanding how the Western scientific and cultural imagination gathered momentum in the era of high imperialism.

Images as a Site of Historical Interpretation and Analysis

The appropriation of images as a site of historical interpretation and analysis in this article draws on a broader conceptual framework in visual and cultural theory (Clifford 1997; Grimshaw 2001; Maxwell 1999, 2008). The advent of photography brought the privileging of the visual over other senses, the ideal fulfillment of "ocularcentrism" in Western culture. Photography became an essential instrument in scientific representation; it was therefore normalized in its visual code. As a medium of representation, photography was generally accepted as offering a "scopic regime", an instilled form of power that bequeathed the observer visual control and authority over what was being represented. Moreover, its mechanical nature, and its automatism, produced objective "visual evidence" of the "real thing", averting the danger of any subjectivity of interpretation (Daston and Galison 1992). Photographs were seen to capture reality as an exact copy, and therefore taken to convey greater authenticity and truthfulness than other modes of representation.

These presumptions permitted photography to contribute significantly to changing European ways of seeing and people's relationship with the knowledge of the world. Nineteenth-century photography paved the way for ways of thinking about colonized

places to which previous communications technologies, such as painting and the written word, had not given rise.

Photography also affected the manner in which power came to be constituted in the colonial age. Early photographs offered a lens on the ways in which colonial power took effect. As a mediated process, photography could represent both histories of exclusion and inclusion between the colonizer and colonized. It also marked out the cultural attitudes that arose at specific moments in the history of colonialism and presented a window into historical prejudices about different races. In its iconic manifestation, photography acted as a symbolic space for the accumulation, construction and elaboration of political priorities and cultural assumptions. Studies illustrate the many and diverse ways in which colonial-era photographs produced stereotyped spectacles of colonized people, according to the social and political agendas of the colonizers (Maxwell 1999; 2008). These images helped to nourish Western conceptions of the other; this role reveals the medium's distinct social and political function in shaping the popular Victorian imagination and enforcing European forms of knowledge.

From the time of its invention, however, photography also undermined the acquired certitudes and reassuring models of the same disciplined ethnocentric visual knowledge that it made possible. This is what Christopher Pinney called "the second history of photography"; he argued "that not only has photography *not* been able to validate its claims to truth, but that it has always betrayed, in its unconscious gestures, a lack of confidence in itself at every turn" (1992, p. 82). As the French artist Honoré Daumier once claimed, "Photography imitates everything and expresses nothing. It is blind in the world of spirit" (quoted in Freund 1974, p. 77). To produce meaning, photographs, unlike other forms of visual objects, needed the active, subjective and individual contribution of the observer. The result of the tension between a normalized visuality, derived from the Enlightenment, and the fragmentation and subjectivization of the experience of reality, was a deep epistemological uncertainty of the sort symbolized in Haddon's photographs of Borneo.

Haddon's photographs represent a critical historical site for analysing what was, at the time that he took them, the new anthropological discipline. They permit exploration of the relationship between that discipline and the assumptions underpinning photographic renderings of perceived reality. Haddon made a continuous effort to produce meaning around his images, as he contextualized them on the pages of his books, embedded them in the narrative sequence of his lectures and organized them in his archive. Awareness of this effort accentuates a period in which anthropology faced serious doubt and questions about the nature of human evolution, and about the relationship between colonizers and colonized people. Re-examining these photographs today we may raise new questions concerning representation and identity, and the nature of the "truths" central to certain historical moments.

The Promise of Borneo

Haddon did not intend to visit Borneo. His original plan was to travel only to the Torres Strait, mainly to compensate for the meagre anthropological data that he had collected during a visit to the region ten years earlier on a trip that had also taken him to New Guinea. But Haddon decided to travel to Sarawak on the invitation of Charles Hose, an administrator working on Borneo in the service of the Rajah Charles Brooke of Sarawak (see Quiginn 1942, p. 103). Hose would later write several books that contributed prominently to the construction of knowledge and Western imaginings of early tribal and traditional life in Borneo (1912; 1926). He was a keen amateur ethnologist whom Haddon had met in London some years earlier. Having learned of the preparations for Haddon's expedition to the Torres Strait, Hose wrote a long letter to Haddon from Kuching, the first in a rich correspondence that lasted many years. He invited the British scientist to pay him a visit in the district of Baram, where "is still to be seen what cannot be seen in other parts, the peoples as they were hundreds of years ago, as regards their customs, but obedient to my government" (Hose 26/08/1897). Besides giving

Haddon the opportunity to observe a native reality "so rich and fully preserved" (ibid.), Hose enthusiastically made himself available to serve as a guide to Haddon and his companions. He also offered Haddon complete hospitality, providing boats, people, and his "jungle home", full of ethnological samples and a library of more than 700 scientific volumes. To equip his hosts with "first-hand data", Hose promised access to the local people and their customs. In the same letter, he wrote,

> I will do my very utmost to make everything a success for you — I will have all sorts of feasts and native festivities arranged to take place during the time you are here, you will see what others have never seen, and I will undertake to say you will never regret the time spent in Borneo. (ibid.)

There was certainly no reason to reject this proposal. For Haddon, like most explorers of his time, Borneo represented a scientific paradise, a place in which he could test the methodological requirements of the new discipline of anthropology. As Crocker had written some years before,

> Borneo offers a richer field than perhaps any other portion of the globe to all those interested in the study of primitive races, peopled as it is by hundreds of tribes showing every graduation of imperfect civilisation, from men living absolutely in a state of nature — who neither cultivate the ground nor live in houses, but who roam the woods in search of plants and fruits, and in quest of game, which they kill with their blowpipes and poisoned arrows — up to the polished Malay gentleman who affects European dress and gives champagne dinner parties to his English friends. (1886, p. 426)

The conditions for research were also favourable. On the one hand, the region was almost untouched, not having been affected as deeply as most other colonized territories by the impact of Western civilization. On the other, thanks to a well organized administrative system, it assured safe and controlled access to native culture. Moreover, only indirect knowledge about this country, mainly based on the accounts and collections of untrained travellers or residents, existed.

A range of cultural images of the other inspired the colonial imagination (see Hoskins 1996). Different visitors to Southeast Asia perpetuated these images. Sarawak held a particular place in the history of British colonial expansion on account of its conquest and personal rule by James Brooke, who established in 1842 a family dynasty of "White Rajahs" that reigned for over a century. Brooke's leadership was unique. His declared defence of native interests and rejection of commercial exploitation helped give shape to Sarawak as a place with "mythical significance" in Victorian culture. This image, combined with the lure of a tropical forest seen as "hardly penetrable" by white men and the presence of animals and plants "yet to be discovered", made Sarawak a frontier for explorers and naturalists alike. It was a kind of "primitive" and inviolable "Eden" waiting to be discovered and explored by Europeans (Morgan 1996, p. 190).

Along with the notion of the territory as an untamed and untouched wilderness, ritual practices and traditions such as head hunting persisted. The cultures of the people were considered so starkly those of "the other" by collectors that written observations and photographs took on great value. The belief was that such records could help with the classification and origin of the different ethnic groups, and of fauna and flora. Visual documents, in particular, played a role in fortifying the European sense of identity and sophistication in contrast to the "archaic" position of the colonized people.

Travellers also had a crucial part in developing the myth of Borneo as an intact paradise for exploration in the colonial imagination (see Markwell 2001). The naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace spent eight years in what he called the Malayan Archipelago, from 1854 to 1862. He was responsible for formulating a theory of natural selection, also known as the "Sarawak Law", through his work on the populations of the region (Wallace 1855). The "Sarawak Law" contributed to the development of evolutionary theory and anticipated Darwin's ideas. Wallace's writings on scientific and sociological issues were highly regarded in academic circles and his popular publication, *The Malayan Archipelago*, became the definitive text on the region (1869).

In 1876, some years after Wallace visited Borneo, the painter Marianne North also travelled to Sarawak as a guest of Margaret Brooke, the wife of Charles Brooke who was head of state of Sarawak between 1868 and 1917. North was lauded for her paintings particularly because her reproductions of plants were seen as scientifically accurate. Such accuracy was important in the period prior to the popularity of photography because her paintings were understood to provide a "truthful" visual documentation of tropical vegetation. The perception was that such artistic representations acted as authentic portrayals of reality.

Other observers endorsed many of these images of Borneo as an untamed wilderness awaiting discovery. For instance, Henry Ling Roth's publication, *The Natives of Sarawak* and *British North Borneo* (1896), contains two volumes and was based chiefly on the unpublished manuscripts of Hugh Brooke Low, a young Sarawak civil servant. They described extensively the customs and traditions of the different peoples of Borneo and were illustrated with photographs of ornaments, artwork, engravings and tattoo designs. Roth's two volumes, which Haddon reviewed positively in 1897 in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* (Haddon 1897), certainly contributed to Haddon's decision to add Borneo to the itinerary of his imminent expedition. In any case, by November 1897 Sarawak had became a priority to Haddon, and he was subsequently successful in obtaining a grant of £50 from the Royal Irish Academy to support his proposed study of native decorative art (Haddon 1897*a*).

Haddon's private journal, almost completely transcribed in his 1901 volume, *Head-Hunters, Black, White, and Brown*, describes his visit to Sarawak. Unfavourable weather conditions meant that Haddon could not immediately travel to the Baram region. So his itinerary began in Kuching, Sarawak's capital, where the members of the expedition spent almost three weeks starting 12 December 1898. Kuching provided an ideal place for the travellers to recuperate after their time in the Torres Strait. They attended the Christmas and the New Year celebrations organized by the small local European community in the city (Haddon 1901*a*, p. 280).

This short respite allowed Haddon to deepen his knowledge of the country, its history and customs by reading the *Sarawak Gazette*, the official monthly publication of the local administration. This newspaper featured news and descriptions of the habits and native customs of the local people. Haddon also photographed some of the collections in the museum, which included many different types of fabrics. The museum housed Hugh Low's ethnographic collection; and Rajah Charles Brooke had opened it some years earlier in 1891. When Haddon arrived in Sarawak, the entomologist Robert Shelford had just been appointed as the curator. He was working with local people to collect material for the collections from around Borneo. The time that Haddon spent in the museum was interesting for him not only because of his interest in the objects on display, but also for the community of visitors to the museum. Haddon's descriptive observations about these visitors resembled, in his journal entries, a hallmark of anthropological writings of the era.

> [The Museum] is a favourite resort for natives, and every day numbers of Chinese, Malays, and Dayaks come to have a look round. Often women and children come too, and very picturesque are some of the groups, as fortunately the natives retain their own costumes, and do not ape European clothing, which, whatever its effect when worn by ourselves, is ugly and incongruous when adopted by most native races. The Dayak men often have very little on, but that is an advantage, as one can then admire their shapely limbs. Their "chawats," or loin cloths, are varied in colour, and however bright they may be, they always harmonise with the beautiful deep cinnamon coloured skin of the wearer. (1901*a*, p. 283)

On 4 January, Haddon and the remaining members of his expedition left Kuching for a long journey towards Baram, where they would meet Charles Hose. This trip lasted almost a month, with stops at Sibu, the capital of the Rejang district, and at Limbang, in the eastern part of Sarawak state. Along the way the group slept in longhouses and in makeshift huts in the forest. They encountered members of various ethnic groups, including the nomadic Punans and the Kayans of Umu Belabu. The last stop before reaching Claudetown (now renamed Marudi), where Hose was waiting for them, was a

Kedayan village at Long Linai, where the group had the opportunity to attend a shamanic ritual to cure a sick woman.

By the time Haddon and his companions arrived in Claudetown, the capital of the Baram district, Charles Hose had planned a comprehensive itinerary for the group. It included excursions by boat along rivers and into the wilderness, visits to interior villages, religious ceremonies and opportunities to collect artefacts. Hose's guests also attended a peace-making ceremony that attracted more than 6,000 members of many different ethnic groups. The gathering was organized as a means of pacification and of addressing tensions between the different ethnic groups under the control of the colonial administration. The event was doubtless also staged to serve Hose's position of authority among local people (Haddon 1901*a*, pp. 399–415).

Haddon documented his visit to Claudetown and the Baram region extensively in his book *Head-hunters: Black, White and Brown*. The visit also provided material for two other chapters of ethnographic analysis, on "omen animals" and the cult of skulls (Haddon 1900*a*; 1901*c*). His group also attended a divination rite in Aban Abit, an inauguration ceremony for a new longhouse with a ritual involving the transport of tutelary skulls in Long Puah, as well as a naming ceremony for the son of a chief in the same village. There is no doubt that Hose's eagerness to play host led to purposefully staged and contrived events. He was also an important intermediary in providing ethnographic artefacts for Haddon's collections. Local suspicions of foreign visitors would have made the acquisition of such artefacts difficult without such help. Hose's presence made encounters with local people less formal. Sometimes these encounters were even "participatory", as in the case of the baptism of a chief's son, in which Haddon adopted the role of godfather, adding his name to that of the boy's grandfather so that the boy was called Utang Haddon (Haddon 1901*a*, p. 354). At times, local people apparently felt comfortable in Haddon's presence. For instance, on his visit to an influential Kenyah chief in Tama Bulan, he encountered young women who he found,

> the friendliest and jolliest damsels I have met in all my travels. They were not shy, but sat with us after the meal and made themselves agreeable. I quite envied Hose his facility of chatting to them, but the girls tried to make me feel at home by pulling my fingers to make them crack — this appears to be a sort of delicate attention to pay to a friend. (Haddon 1901*a*, p. 376)

Haddon's friendly interactions with the people of Sarawak highlighted his determination to foster mutual respect and trust, a feature of his intensive fieldwork approach. It is evident that Haddon saw the last leg of his journey as an opportunity to take time to enjoy some of the pleasures of his new environment. This more relaxed approach was sometimes evident in the relationship between Haddon and his subjects, one based less on his "authority" as an anthropologist than on his becoming acquainted with them on a personal level.

Hose's presence helped ensure the success of the visit and distinguished it from earlier legs of the expedition. Haddon considered Hose a reliable informant, as well as a trained administrator, and he allowed Hose to lead the expedition in Sarawak without any specific demands. This attitude was unique; distrust characterized many of his other relationships with European residents in the Torres Strait. His respect for the knowledge Hose possessed about the local people contrasted starkly with his view of other Europeans, whom he often suspected of being partial and poorly informed of local realities. Haddon and Hose established a relationship of open and trusting collaboration with each other, one that would endure even after Haddon left Sarawak for Britain and began publishing work that drew on his trip. Haddon's methodological approach represented a distinct model, neither solely dependent on second-hand observations by local colonial informants nor simply the result of intense fieldwork. Haddon himself, in a letter to his wife, confirmed this peculiarity and suggested that it contributed to the success of the expedition.

> I think you may consider this Borneo trip in its way as much of a success as the Torres Straits one. Not only on account of the work we have accomplished and the collection we have inspirited

> Hose to give to Cambridge, but for the influence we have had on Hose himself. We have educated him a good deal, a fact which he acknowledges, and the results of this will be considerable in the future and this is as valuable as we had accumulated facts ourselves. (1899*a*)

The Sarawak Photographs

The special relationship with Charles Hose was not the only peculiarity of the expedition. Haddon's travel accounts of Sarawak articulate the mission's exploratory and relaxed character and its mobility. Sarawak was a very different place to the Torres Strait, where Haddon and his team conducted research mainly on circumscribed local communities. In Sarawak they made rapid observations, traversed quickly from village to village and from jungle to river. Their encounters with local people were often by chance, inspired more by their own curiosity than by specific scientific goals. They had laid out no programme of systematic fieldwork.

Another important difference to the Torres Strait leg of the trip was the absence in the final stage of the expedition of two members of Haddon's team: W.H.R. Rivers, a physician and psychologist; and Anthony Wilkin, Haddon's student and the person placed in charge of the photographic equipment. Both returned to England before the conclusion of the trip. As Wilkin was the official photographer, his absence left a significant gap in the visual component of the expedition. Furthermore, the group made the decision to abandon cinematography and colour photography, perhaps because Haddon had experienced disappointment with these media in the Torres Strait. As a result of Wilkin's absence, the task of visually documenting the expedition fell upon the remaining members of the team: Haddon himself, Charles Samuel Myers and Charles Gabriel Seligman. Each of these men possessed his own camera but lacked confidence in his ability to use it.

Haddon's choosing to take his own photographs was an important decision in his career as an anthropologist. In all his scientific work, images are a constitutive element, symbolizing his complex

methodological strategy on multiple levels. Prior to the expedition, Haddon managed a section on photography in *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* (Garson and Read 1899), which was edited for travellers and colonial administrators by the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The publication covered a range of topics related to photography, including information on the technical (the different kinds of cameras, plates, and processing), the methodological (what to photograph and how), and the practical (how to consider the relationship between the photographer and native subjects).

During the first part of his stay in Sarawak, Haddon felt a great responsibility for photographic documentation, which became an obsessive concern. He made frequent references to it in his notebook and journal, in which he meticulously described the subjects, quantity and quality of photographs taken (also see Haddon 1898 and 1898–1899). Whenever possible, Haddon personally developed and printed his own negatives to ensure he had a visual record of each component of his trip. With time, however, and especially after the team's arrival in Baram, this scrupulous attention to detail diminished. Haddon's photographic notes primarily record his regret for having missed opportunities or express his disappointment with the poor quality of images.

If we closely examine the photographs taken during the Borneo expedition, we may read Haddon's difficulties, anxieties and frustrations in the images. The quality of the prints is mediocre; the choice of subjects and their composition also appear unremarkable. One of the recurring subjects of the images is the water and the river. It is obvious the landscape is presented from a traveller's perspective because the scenery changes with each new photograph. Most of the photographs were taken at water level and appear rather casual. They carve out portions of the river and vegetation without a specific object in the foreground. They seem more a record of the everyday perils and adventure of the journey, rather than the details of a naturalistic inquiry (Figure 1). They thus blatantly contradict one of Haddon's main points in *Notes and Queries*: "a few views of characteristic scenery are sufficient, merely pretty bits need not

FIGURE 1 Poling up the rapids, Baram River (MAA [Museum of Archaeology and Anthopology], Cambridge, Photographic Collection).

be taken nor views that do not teach anything" (Haddon 1899, p. 239).

After his arrival in Baram, Haddon's images seem gripped by an emotional fervor. They record a trip full of adventure and peril, and are not reflective of similar expeditions with a naturalistic focus. Even the more elaborate photographs depict a keen aesthetic eye inspired by Borneo's wilderness and the sense of romance and mystery reminiscent in early paintings of the region. A photo of the Scott-Keltie Falls in the Mt Dulit Baram District was typical of the images captured during this time. It became the front cover of *Head-hunters: Black, White and Brown.*

Only rarely did Haddon adhere in Sarawak to the practical instructions of *Notes and Queries.* There are typological ethnographic portraits with local subjects without any distinguishing surrounding

vegetation as a backdrop. The people in some of these photographs emerge as relaxed and uninhibited, often looking directly to the lens (Figures 2–3). It is obvious the images are not "re-enactments" or photographs of local people posing primarily to meet the anthropologist's agenda or to promote their difference for the colonial gaze. This practice, so characteristic of Haddon's previous work in the Torres Strait (Edwards 2001*b*, pp. 157–80), is absent from the

FIGURE 2 Iban dancing (MAA, Cambridge, Photographic Collection).

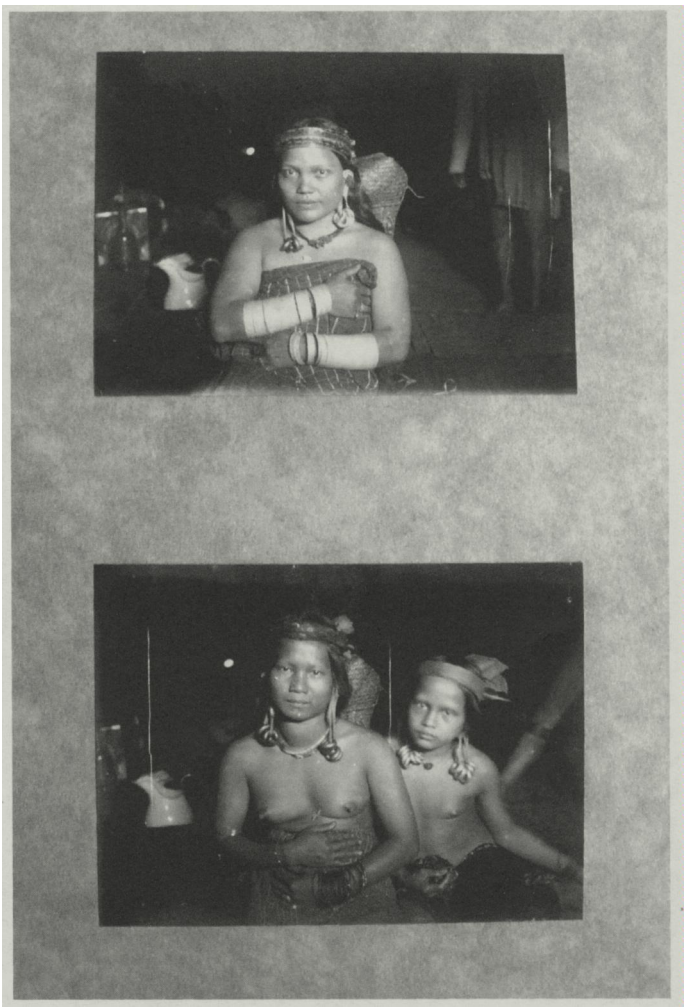

FIGURE 3 Bottom: Kenyah women; Top: Bulan, daughter of Tama Bulan, the principal Kenyah chief in the Baram area) (MAA, Cambridge, Photographic Collection).

Sarawak images. None of the photographs appears staged. Some include unidentified foreigners dressed in white colonial uniforms (Figures 4–5). There was no attempt made to keep the foreigners out of the picture or to capture a supposedly more "authentic" picture by including only local people, unlike in the Torres Strait photographs of the earlier expedition or from earlier parts of the Sarawak visit.

Figure 4 Charles Hose and unidentified expedition members with local people (MAA, Cambridge, Photographic Collection).

FIGURE 5 The 1899 peacemaking ceremony at Marudi (Claudetown) (MAA, Cambridge, Photographic Collection).

After Sarawak: From Fieldwork to the Archive

Haddon returned to England at the end of May 1899. From the very beginning, a series of conferences, articles, lantern slide shows and the prompt publication of his travel account (Haddon 1901*a*) contributed to the success of the expedition and helped to make the careers of its participants. For all of them, promising academic opportunities opened up, despite the fact that the results of the study were not published until years later. The period following his return from Sarawak ushered in a new phase of Haddon's career as an anthropologist, on a trajectory that later led to his establishment of the School of Anthropology at Christ's College, Cambridge (Kuklick 1991).

Haddon was initially cautious about sharing the results of the Borneo expedition and decided to wait an entire year for the arrival in England of Charles Hose to present his findings in articles and lectures. On 5 March 1900 Hose presented a lecture, "In the Heart of Borneo", to the Royal Geographical Society (Hose 1900). Haddon decided to take a back seat in these proceedings, speaking only to praise Hose for his remarkable work as an administrator in Sarawak. Later that month, on 27 March, Haddon presented his own account of the expedition in a lecture at the Anthropological Institute on "Native Life and Customs in Sarawak", with Hose and Rivers as discussants. A report in the journal *Nature* (1900*c*) points out the lecture was devoted mainly to the exhibition of lantern slides made from photographs taken by members of the expedition and that it followed a thematic narrative structure. It began with "river scenery of the Baram district of Sarawak, and the way in which travel is accomplished in that region", then described "the domestic life of the natives" with a focus on longhouses, their construction, the distribution of space, decorations and furniture and ended with a description of the "occupations of the natives". After Haddon's talk, Hose also showed some slides and a discussion on cannibalism in Borneo ensued (1900*c*, pp. 578–79).

Other lectures were to follow, including the ones presented by Haddon, Hose and William McDougall to a meeting of the anthropological section of the British Association for the Advancement

of Science in Bradford on 7 September 1900 (Haddon 1900*b*; Hose and McDougall 1900). These early lectures were the first attempts to reorganize and evaluate the research Haddon had conducted in Sarawak (see also Haddon 1900*d*, 1900*e*, 1900*f*). The lantern slide presentation featured a shifting montage of images accompanied by commentary from the speaker. They represented the developing ideas of the expedition members as they reflected on the notes and photographs taken during their trip. Among Haddon's papers in the Cambridge University Library, there are handwritten notes, plans and layouts with a complete list of the slides that he showed at his lectures. In most of these presentations the images took centre stage. Haddon adopted multiple rhetorical strategies, depending on the audience and on his approach to his theme. He alternated between a narrative structure organized around his account of his travels and a more thematic approach. Over time, Haddon received new images from other travellers and residents in Sarawak, and these photographs were sometimes used to replace Haddon's own poor-quality images.

Lectures were an effective means of generating interest prior to the release of Haddon's book *Head-hunters: Black, White and Brown*, which was considered the official account of the journey. The book covered the entire 1898–99 expedition, but the section on Borneo holds an important place both in terms of the space allocated and of the vividness of the descriptive accounts. Over the next decade Borneo continued to fascinate Haddon. His notebooks, correspondence, drafts, lists of people's measurements and charts and handwritten accounts are now preserved among his papers in the Cambridge University Library. This archive attests that Borneo emerged in this period as an experimental laboratory for the anthropological discipline. Haddon personally carried out a wide range of research, from studies on craniological data to an analysis of other anthropometric statistics (skin colour, height, etc.) and comparative research on the region's linguistic variations, decorative arts and genealogy. Haddon delegated other research topics on Borneo to his pupils and colleagues, creating a close network of European correspondents all focused on collecting

information, samples, measurements and photographs to enhance his own analytical work.

One topic in particular became central to Haddon's attention to Borneo: the origin and distribution of the ethnic groups of the territory. This question was only briefly mentioned in *Head-hunters: Black, White and Brown* because of the lack of data collected during fieldwork. Haddon observes in that volume,

> We have not at present sufficient precise information to be able to speak with certainty concerning the characters and affinities of all the races and peoples that inhabit Borneo. One of our objects in visiting Sarawak was the hope that by measuring a large number of people, and by recording their physical features, we might help towards a solution of the ethnic problems; we also hoped that further light might be thrown on the matter by a comparative study of their customs, beliefs, as well as of their arts and crafts. Our stay was of too short a duration, and the ground we covered was not sufficiently extensive for us to do much in this regard, and our physical results have yet to be fully worked out. (Haddon, 1901*a*, p. 320)

This observation certainly reflected Haddon's feelings of inadequacy about the Sarawak expedition. While it revealed his growing reservations about his research findings, it also highlighted a period of insecurity in the field of anthropology more generally. In 1901 Haddon was invited by his friend Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to present a paper titled "A Sketch of the Ethnography of Sarawak" at the special session of the *Società Italiana per l'Antropologia e la Etnologia* (1901*b*) held in Florence on the thirtieth anniversary of the society's foundation. He classified the inhabitants of Borneo into five groups — Punan, Kalamantan, Kenyah-Kayan, Iban (Sea Dayaks) and Malay — belonging to only two original races — Indonesian (dolichocephalic) and Proto-Malays (brachycephalic). But this taxonomic attempt, chiefly based on anthropometric data, was not completely satisfactory. It revealed methodological inconsistencies that Haddon himself pointed out awkwardly.

> I feel some diffidence in dealing so largely with the cephalic index as it is now so much discredited by several anthropologists.... Dr. Hose and I propose, on a subsequent occasion, to deal with

> the cultural characteristics of these groups of Sarawak natives, and this evidence will prove to be more conclusive as to the distinctness of these groups than is the anthropometric argument. (Haddon 1901*b*, p. 355)

Subsequent research, however, did not clarify matters. Some of Haddon's analysis proved contradictory and incoherent. As a result, his disappointment and frustration at being unable to analyse his material more conclusively increased. One of his colleagues, Barbara Freire-Marreco, frequently wrote to him contesting the methods and results of anthropometric statistics. Hose, in a poignant letter dated 3 May 1910, also stressed the incongruities deriving from cranial measurements, which risked mixing "fancy and facts" (Hose 1910).

Despite these complications, Haddon presented a similar classification of Borneo peoples again in his popular book on *The Races of Man and their Distribution* (1909) and, with minor variations in the appendix, to "The Physical Characters of the Races of Borneo" (1912) that he contributed to Charles Hose's book, *Pagan Tribes of Borneo* (Hose and McDougall 1912). Here, however, the description of the different ethnic groups is preceded by a surprisingly small footnote, revealing his consensus with colonial officials' accounts of local classifications.

> This (classification) was drawn up by Dr Hose from his general knowledge of the people of Sarawak, and it will be found to agree very closely with the anthropometric data, thus we may regard it as expressing the present state of our knowledge of the affinities of the several tribes. (Haddon 1912, p. 319)

What this note expresses is Haddon's abandonment of the anthropometric paradigm and the acknowledgment of the primacy of (amateur) colonial knowledge in informing anthropology as a discipline. Such conclusions reflected the contradictions of colonial anthropology, accentuating the divide that was beginning to emerge between the anthropological discipline and a new empiricism. Haddon's activities in Sarawak illustrate the way in which the rise of the anthropological discourse and discipline at the turn of the twentieth century was far from coherent and linear. In its own way, photography contributed to this process by introducing new

challenges. Through its ambiguous representation of evidence, it complicated the taxonomic goals of the emerging discipline.

Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to reflect on Haddon's exploration in Borneo and his contribution to shaping the field of anthropology. We have discussed the differences between his approach to studying the people and environment of Sarawak and that taken during his earlier work in the Torres Strait. We have questioned the production of knowledge about Borneo by placing Haddon's photographic archive within a historical context and situating that archive in the development of a new anthropological paradigm. Finally, we have questioned the role of photography in this construction or deconstruction of anthropological knowledge.

Photography played a crucial role in reinforcing anthropological discourse, particularly formulating popular perceptions about Asia and its people in the late Victorian era. In the case of Sarawak, Haddon's photographs helped to endorse a narrative of success for the enterprise of colonization at the same time as they perpetuated a new empiricism in the study of evolution. However, this unique blend of authoritative and emerging knowledge introduced constraints and contradictions to the developing field of anthropology. Seen in this context, Haddon's research in Borneo represented an open challenge to the methodological principles of the new discipline, but it was itself a body of work that eventually yielded to erroneous and incomplete conclusions.

An analysis of the history of images illustrates the value of photographs in conveying frameworks of production and circulation. The deposit of certain images in the archives has enabled us to reconstruct a history of intentions, relations and networks from the past. In turn, this reconstruction assisted our consideration of the foundations for the diffusion of knowledge and the material roots of the construction of a shared imagination. Photography constitutes a privileged medium for the circulation of knowledge. In an archive, it offers fertile ground for understanding the reasons that photographs

can act as important symbolic sites of representation and that they played a crucial part in transforming Western ways of seeing.

Colonial photographs contributed to the production of specific forms of knowledge and to the emergence of a particular kind of geographical and cultural imagination. Visual means of communicating difference represented the "primitiveness" of colonized peoples in contrast to the "progressiveness" of the West (Maxwell 1999, 2008). The reproduction and contextualization of these images in our study seeks to destabilize these racialized and often racist discourses during the colonial era. Colonial photographs are worth interrogating as much for what they reveal about the people who captured them as for what they tell us about a particular period in our cultural history. Photographic archives afford opportunities to challenge monolithic representations of the "truth".

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